

**7 May 2019**

## **Offshore Oil and Gas Planning Loophole Must be Closed**

Local politicians have been warned that a Welsh Marine Plan could provide an opening for companies to search for oil and gas in Cardigan Bay even though the Welsh Government has stated strong opposition to such activity.

Pembrokeshire Friends of the Earth has written to local AM's pointing out that the draft Welsh National Marine Plan (WNMP) supports the exploitation of offshore oil and gas resources for Wales and the UK [1]. This, the group says, is in direct conflict with the Welsh Government's commitment to oppose the extraction of all fossil fuels in Wales.

Gordon James, a spokesman for the group, said:

"We are delighted that Eni UK Ltd has scrapped its hugely unpopular plan to survey for oil and gas off the West Wales coast. We have pointed out to local politicians that the company based its application on a statement in the draft Welsh National Marine Plan that encourages oil and gas exploitation in Welsh waters. This loophole has to be closed if we are to ensure that the threat of further exploration is removed from these important marine environments.

We welcome the announcement by Wales' First Minister, Mark Drakeford, that his government opposes the extraction of all fossil fuels in Wales. The draft Marine Plan flies in the face of this policy. This anomaly must be addressed before the Plan's publication later in the summer if the Welsh Government's policy is to be watertight."

ENDS

For further information phone Gordon James on 01437563670 or 07579964256

NOTES

1. Copy of letter sent to AM's Eluned Morgan, Paul Davies, Joyce Watson, Helen Mary Jones and Elin Jones